

FREEZE

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STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAII

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

GOVERNOR GREEN APPLAUDS FEDERAL JUDGE FOR HALTING FUNDING FREEZE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 28, 2025

HONOLULU — Governor Josh Green, M.D., applauds the ruling by a federal court judge today, blocking the order by President Trump to freeze federal funding for crucial programs serving Americans. The Governor stands in strong opposition to President Trump's executive order pausing federal disbursements, which has caused a great deal of chaos, confusion and uncertainty.

"The presidential order seeks to prevent the people of Hawai'i from receiving crucial services funded by the millions of dollars they pay to the federal government each year. This cannot stand," said Governor Green. "My administration is currently assessing the impact of this pause on essential state programs and services, including education, health care, social services, and wildfire recovery. For those programs that are found to be impacted, the state of Hawai'i will work to develop alternate plans to ensure that key services for local residents are continued. The state Attorney General has joined other states in initiating legal action to challenge the federal administration's actions, as Hawai'i has already encountered impacts of this threatened funding freeze."

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a memorandum on January 27, 2025, which requires federal agencies to complete a comprehensive analysis of all of their federal financial assistance programs to identify programs, projects and activities that may be impacted by any of the president's executive orders. During this review period, the obligation and disbursement of federal funds were to be paused effective January 28, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

"The OMB has since issued clarification guidance indicating that any program that provides direct benefits to individuals is not subject to the pause, such as Medicaid, SNAP or Social Security benefits, among others," said state Department of Budget and Finance Director Luis Salaveria.

"The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) has several divisions or attached agencies that would be affected," said state Comptroller Keith Regan. "The main impact would be to our public arts initiatives in the State Foundation of Culture and the Arts. Indirectly, it is possible the Archives may need to halt projects funded by its federal grants and our State Procurement Office's Surplus Property Program may be affected by the pause in funding."

The Hawai'i Department of Transportation is working with the Trump Administration on clarifications to the OMB memo, including its impacts on obligated formula projects and discretionary funds.

The state Department of Law Enforcement welcomed the OMB's clarification memo, but is still seeking final determination of impacts from federal partners.

"The Hawai'i Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) is deeply concerned about the temporary pause on federal financial assistance and its potential impacts on our ability to deliver essential services," said DLIR Director Jade T. Butay. "A significant portion of our operations, including workforce development, unemployment insurance, job training and workplace safety through our Occupational Safety and Health division, is supported by federal funds. Any disruption to these critical programs could affect workers, employers and communities statewide. We are actively monitoring the situation and are awaiting further guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor to understand the full scope of the impacts and next steps. We remain committed to serving the people of Hawai'i and ensuring the continuity of essential programs."

The State of Hawai'i Department of Defense (HIDOD) (comprising the Hawai'i National Guard, Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency, Office of Veterans' Services and Civilian Military Programs) evaluated potential impacts to its core mission to enable a safe, secure, and thriving state of Hawai'i. HIDOD relies on approximately \$88M in federal funding for its annual operating budget; about \$350M to administer its Hazardous Mitigation Program Grant; close to \$25M for its Emergency Management Program Grant, and anticipates approximately \$56M in FEMA reimbursement for the recent Maui Wildfires disaster response and recovery. It also receives federal grant funding for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program to synergize its counter-narcotics efforts with federal, state and county law enforcement agencies.

"While these federal programs are being reviewed by OMB, there's no immediate impact to operate, retain qualified personnel, and continue to protect the citizens of the state of Hawai'i," said Maj. Gen. Stephen Logan, State Adjutant General.

The Hawai'i State Public Library System (HSPLS) receives about \$1.5M in Library Services and Technology Act funding that ensures that all local residents have access to library materials, technology in the library to connect to the Internet, and online databases that provide equal access to information and learning opportunities no matter where they live. The suspension of this funding will cause our communities to face limited access to information that supports their health, business, education and ability to connect to the world. Specifically, students will not have free access to test preparation and families will not have easy access to legal forms to support their needs.

HSPLS also is a recipient and partner for two digital equity projects. One provides basic digital literacy classes in all of our communities through May of this year. The second is part of the Federal Broadband Equity Access Deployment (BEAD) funding received by the University of Hawai'i. The funding supports Digital Literacy Navigators in all public libraries to ensure our patrons have access to learning the digital literacy skills they need to be successful.

Governor Green and his administration will continue to work to support the people of Hawai'i, prioritizing affordability, housing, reducing homelessness, increasing food security and more, to allow the residents of the islands to live and thrive in the place they love and call home.

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